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ABSTRACT

The Leadership Enhancement and Development (LEAD) program is designed meet the organization's needs by first meeting the needs of individuals. This document presents dialogue from three former participants of the LEAD program implemented in the Gwinnett County Public School System (Georgia). A vice-principal, principal, and teacher describe their experiences, such as making the transition from teacher to supervisor, improving leadership skills, and developing into a teacher leader. Participants believe that the program's strengths are the supportive relationships among the participants, the quality of the course work and teaching personnel,and the internship experience. Each expresses a high level of personal satisfaction and believes that participation in the LEAD program contributed significantly to his or her professional development. (LMI)

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PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

TO LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND INTERNSHIP

Jackie Beasley, Mary Anne Charron, and Jeff White

Gwinnett County Public Schools

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Abstract of Participant Responses

The Gwinnett County Public School System has a tremendous potential within its ranks. This pool of talent has been built over years of careful hiring, intensive staff development, and moving progressively into traditionally unchartered areas of educational reform. Gwinnett County has been recruiting the best educators and developing ways to utilize the talents of all its employees. The wave of school reform that has swept through this country did not catch us off guard, but it has provided an enormous number of opportunities to rethink, rebuild, replan and remake the system. Leadership Enhancement and Development (LEAD) is one example of a program designed to meet the organization's needs by first meeting the needs of the individuals who make up the Gwinnett County Public School System. The following pages contain dialogue from three former participants of the Leadership Enhancement and Development program. The writers describe situations which drew them to the LEAD program, discuss their impressions during the LEAD experience, and finally comment on their educational careers after the LEAD program. The first discussion is written by Jackie Beasley. Ms. Beasley was a member of the LEAD program in 1990-1991. She is currently an assistant principal at Rebecca Minor Elementary School in Gwinnett County. Mary Anne Charron describes her experiences of LEAD in the second section. Ms. Charron was a member of the first LEAD class in

1988-1989. She is currently the principal of Trickum Middle School in Gwinnett County. Jeff White, who participated in the LEAD class of 1991-1992, narrates his LEAD impressions in the third section.

Mr. White has chosen to broaden his experiences by changing school levels from high school to middle school. He is currently a teacher at Trickum Middle School in Gwinnett County.

LIFE BEFORE LEAD

Jackie Beasley

I left my childhood home of Philadelphia in the summer of 1985. I closed the classroom door on fifteen productive and rewarding years as an elementary teacher in a small suburban school district. Contract disputes between union representatives and school officials had reached an impasse. The small community where I had become so active, was poised for its first teacher strike. As representative for an educators' association, I had suffered through a spring and early summer of difficult, draining negotiations, often seeking a conciliatory middle ground to contract demands. The late hours of endless meetings and increased polarization among the ranks had taken their toll. I was at a precipitous point in my profession. My much loved classroom began to feel stifling and constricting. I was restless. Only the students were important to me that last spring in Philadelphia. I found little enthusiasm for curriculum or committees. I did my job, loved my students and graded papers. We all were going through the motions.

The vote to strike seemed imminent. Teachers who had long been active members in the professional association voted instead for union presentation. It was a bitter, sad collision course that pitted teachers against administrators and one another, and left parents and students feeling betrayed and vulnerable. I felt utterly defeated as we closed school that June. I said goodbye to my students with more than

the usual sadness, and as I closed my beloved classroom door I didn't realize that I was destined not to return.

I was as surprised as anyone by my letter of resignation. I composed it quite unexpectedly late one night in June, and was still somehow surprised to see it accepted. Our superintendent, who had become a friend, offered to discuss my decision. He was sorry to lose me, he added, and went on to wisely suggest that I take a year's sabbatical leave. I took his advice. With an uncharacteristic abandon I ignored the rational advice of family and friends, and made plans to leave Philadelphia. I had a small cash reserve that with penny pinching precision could be drawn out to last a year. The year ahead afforded me an opportunity to visit old friends now scattered throughout the United States. But most importantly, I would be allowed the luxury of introspection. I somehow knew that I could not leave the "teacher" part of me far behind. The thought of not meeting a new classroom of eager faces that fall was as unsettling as the prospect of leaving my childhood home and family. But I was single, and relatively unencumbered. My very wise mother counseled, "It's not as much the things you've done that you will regret; but the things you haven't done that will come back to haunt you." I thought she was probably right. I packed my car, and tried to understand the profound sense of sadness that enveloped me as I headed south on Interstate 85.

I arranged to visit a childhood friend and her husband, who had moved to Atlanta some years earlier. On the recommendation of a

colleague, I was to contact the coordinator of an innovative program for gifted students during my stay. The contact developed into a four hour interview, which evolved into an exciting job offer. By August of the same year, I resigned from my old position and faced a new group of students who were intrigued with my accent. I felt farther than 800 miles away from home.

My new position was in a school of 700 in the fastest growing county in the nation. I was amazed at the level of excitement, spirit and innovation. I was also amazed at how "up-ended" I felt. While everyone was friendly and supportive, I was keenly aware that I was an unknown quantity. Fifteen years in one school district had provided me with a comfort zone of familiarity and degree of notoriety. With renewed motivation and dedication, I polished my craft, and with some tentative starts, practiced the art and science of teaching with new found resolve. I warmed in the fellowship of new relationships with students, parents and teachers.

In my fourth year, I was our school's teacher of the year, county finalist for the gifted program teacher of the year, and engaged to a wonderful man. My love of teaching children had grown to include a great satisfaction working with teachers. I had made a happy new home in Georgia, and people only rarely commented on my accent.

The LEAD Experience

My metamorphosis from teacher to supervisor was a natural evolution. I came to the position of assistant principal rather late in

life, as my teaching career supplied me with many challenges and opportunities. The change in roles came more from a natural progression than a conscious decision to change jobs or titles. My desire to help children grew to wanting to help teachers help children. It was the LEAD experience that shaped that vision into reality.

In 1989, I was privileged to be one of thirteen women selected to participate in the LEAD program. My cohorts were talented and articulate and represented a wide range of ages and experiences. I was honored and fortunate to be one of them. From the very first class meeting, I knew I was embarking on a mind altering adventure.

I have a keen and humbling memory of my first class assignment. During a "working lunch," we were to discuss the differences between Administration and Supervision. I could not conceive of a difference and assumed they were one and the same. How much I learned since then is a testament to the dedication and perseverance of the professors at the University of Georgia. Through their concerted efforts our transformation was planned and orchestrated. My LEAD-mates and I were transformed through our course work and our professors, and in an important way - through one another.

When or how the bonding took place is still somewhat a mystery. Almost immediately, the group felt a kinship and mutual respect for one another. Perhaps it was the intensity of our discussions, combined with late nights and long hours. We were slowly melded

believed I had finely honed, tried and true classroom skills that could be usefully shared with teachers. I had assumed that was what supervision was all about.

I knew "who" and "what" I was in the classroom. Twenty years worth of good and bad experiences in elementary schools had consolidated in me a firm belief in the art and science of teaching. But I wasn't sure "who" and "what" I was when coaching in the classroom from the sidelines. Often I was reminded of classes with Dr. Edith Grimsley saying with her head tilted, with the earnest fervor that only she could muster, ". . . and remember - that while it's important to know what we're doing, and how we're doing it, it's much more important to know why."

As a first year administrator my naivete' was quickly extinguished by the enormity of the job. There seemed to be many more reasons for staying behind a desk than for rejoining the world of teachers and students. The "office" seemed an ocean away from the comfortable island I knew in the classroom. I had a sinking feeling of having become "one of them." My major accomplishment was keeping my head above water, surviving, and not bringing great embarrassment to my principal. As the dust settled on that first year, I vowed to make some changes.

Deciding that actions spoke louder than words I made sure to be out and about each morning. I taught lessons in classrooms and talked with teachers. I searched for materials, and spent time on the floor

and molded into a team - aware of one another's strengths and talents, soft spots and blind spots. Group projects were memorable not so much for the topics, as for the level of communication and collaboration achieved as we accomplished them. As the internship approached, I felt invigorated with a heightened sense of purpose. With my colleagues, the art of instructional supervision was held to the light.

As classroom teacher, I was afforded the luxury and privacy of closing the classroom door - alone with my children. As LEAD intern, I was assigned to visit classrooms as observer. With notebook in hand, I saw the classroom from the students' point of view, for the very first time. No textbook could have prepared me for the range of teaching styles; of finely delivered and poorly executed lessons. Teachers I knew only from faculty lounge conversations, took on a whole new dimension inside the confines of their classroom. I realized the enormity and complexity of the role of the instructional supervisor. I realized for the first time, that if I were lucky enough to be offered a position, I would have a monumental job ahead of me. I wondered often, if I were up to the task. I had serious doubts.

The Legacy of LEAD

My first year as an assistant principal produced the greatest stress of my professional career. My husband of one year had expected that life might return to normalcy after LEAD. He and I were unprepared for the roller coaster of emotions that accompanied my new position. I

with the kids. I read good books to children, and praised their accomplishments. Somehow the "administrative" emergencies waited - and sometimes the cries even solved themselves with time. "She's out in the classrooms!" the secretaries would chirp. And the angry parent had thankfully softened by the time I reached them at the end of the day. The line of teachers waiting to "talk classroom" with me grew outside my office door. I began to see that in a small but infinitely important ways "I am what I do, and I do what I believe." I started to get a handle on the "Theory" and "Basis of Practice" business.

A need for theory was pointed out by Lovell and Wiles (1983) "A theory provides a framework for sorting and classifying information. This information then guides practice and ultimately enables the professional to engage in self-education." Somehow that was it! A theory - a personal supervisory theory would provide a framework for sorting and classifying - a much needed screen to sift through the countless human encounters and information overload to define the essence of me a supervisor.

To construct this framework I set about making lists - what I did each day, which of those activities were important, what I wanted to do, what I resented doing. A picture of me slowly took shape.

Guided by the expert hand of Dr. Ray Bruce, I spent the fall of my second year on a a scholarly quest. In my most memorable if not most critical graduate course, Trends and Issues, we bridged theory into practice - beliefs into reality. From Alphonso to Wiles, the search for

theoretical foundations for supervision proved to be challenging if not difficult. Some years earlier the member of COPIS gathered to explore a similar theme: The Evolution and History of Supervision. According to Reinhartz and Beach, (1988) even the COPIS members found their search challenging and difficult. Their difficulty echoed mine.

> The challenge has been to extricate the components that support a theory from the various supervision texts. The search has been somewhat difficult because the theoretical base used by each author was often disguised or overshadowed by the descriptions or the practical orientations that were employed and therefore some interpolating was required.

"Interpolating indeed!" I impatiently huffed. If Beach and Reinhartz were puzzled, at least I was in good company. But my frustration came not so much from the review of the literature, as the gnawing absence of my own personal basis of practice - my own guiding light.

Ben Harris (1985) acknowledged this difficulty when he stated, "Supervision like any complex part of an even more complex enterprise can be viewed in various ways and inevitably is." The more I read the more I was puzzled. Each week Dr. Bruce urged our class to search for our own definition of our supervisory selves. Lovell and Wiles (1983) reminded me, "Supervisors always operated from a theoretical base." Sergiovanni and Starratt (1988) pointed out, "The

question for supervisors is not whether they are being theoretical or not, but what are the theories (implicit hunches and operating principles) which provide the basis for professional decision and practice."

In three years I have grown beyond survival strategies. Because of an encouraging and supportive principal, and a patient and understanding staff, I have felt and seen my contributions make a difference. The students know me by name and visit me often to share their accomplishments. The teachers "talk classroom" with me on a regular basis, and parents in the community feel comfortable calling to ask me advice.

I continue to view teaching as a dynamic, scientific art, requiring practice, patience and inspiration. More and more, I see teachers as growing adults who will become more professional and successful as they are provided with a work environment that demands choice, collaborative decision making, autonomy, and reflection. In some small way, I hope to contribute to that environment.

All of these beliefs, and the lessons from Drs. Bruce and Grimsley were put to task the day the first-year teacher cried in my office. She had had a most difficult day with unruly students and over-zealous lesson plans - in fact there had been a parade of bad days. She said that teaching was the hardest thing she had ever done. I nodded knowingly. She told me that her fellow teachers had told her to come to me, that I could help her, and that I would understand.

Theories are not so much known in the head as they are practiced in the heart - day-by-day, decision-to-decision. I am a supervisor because I know about "Teachers" and "Teaching" and I believe in the great potential of all children.

We worked late that rainy day - first-year teacher and the twenty-year veteran hunched over lesson plans and behavior management plans. I shared war stories of my teaching past and she left happier and more confident in herself.

I saw her the following day in the school cafeteria. She was smiling broadly. Some things we had discussed the day before were tried and were successful. She was elated - and with her youthful melodrama said solemnly, "I am your clay - Mold me!" I reached to clasp her hand and thought, I'll teach you to mold yourself - day-by-day, decision-to-decision, till you become the teacher you always wanted to be - just as day-by-day I learn to become the supervisor I hope to be.

In the world of teachers and supervisors, we become what we do every day - and a first-year teacher has much in common with a third-year supervisor. I am about the business of teachers and children and teaching. I always was.

REFLECTIONS

Mary Anne Charron

The perspective of my impressions regarding the Leadership Enhancement and Development (LEAD) program are influenced by significant factors that occurred in the years proceeding LEAD and my current position as a school principal.

Education was one of the most coveted gifts my parents bestowed on my six brothers and sisters and me, and each of us values our college degrees. In my sixteen years of teaching before entering the LEAD program, I had the opportunity to work in six states and had an array of diverse experiences that enabled me to learn about my strengths and weaknesses. In my divergent teaching assignments, I was also influenced by a heterogeneity of educational leaders. Being raised in an environment valuing education, teaching in a variety of environments, and having strong role models impacted my decision and enhanced my ability to become a school leader.

These experiences, blended with my actual administrative responsibilities and the LEAD program, have influenced my view of educational leadership.

The LEAD Program

Gwinnett County Public Schools and the University of Georgia announced the formation of the Leadership and Enhancement Development program in the spring of 1988. I applied and was accepted into LEAD at that time.

My evaluation of LEAD has remained consistent from the time that I completed the program until now. Overwhelmingly, three dimensions of the program were the most powerful to me. These include: the relationship of the LEAD participants, the quality of the course work and the teaching personnel, and the internship. I will expound on these areas.

The dynamics that formed within our fourteen member class was an aspect I had not anticipated. The bonding began immediately because our insecurities were common. Since none of us was certain of our administrative future there was no competition among us. Quite naturally, however, we began to see a metamorphosis occur within class members. Our responses and questions began taking on new depth.

As we began this refinement from narrow to more visionary thinking, the members of the class began to respect one another for his/her viewpoint. We internally began identifying the role that each member exhibited in the group process. We had our philosopher, problem solver, communicator, writer, synthesizer, and our task master. Seeing each of our areas of strength emerge provided significant learning opportunities because we became role models for one another. These areas also made our group more cohesive as we completed assignments and activities.

Besides learning to value one another for our leadership skills, we began caring for each other as extended family. We were spending

three or four nights per week together in classes or studying, so this bond formed quickly and easily. Five years after the LEAD experience, our group continues to be a closely entwined network. We call each other for advice, celebrate joys, share sorrows, and have a deep respect for one another. This occurred because we began our LEAD experience at the same level of inexperience and never felt the need for competition from within our learning system.

The quality of the course work and the caliber of professionals who taught us were the best I encountered in my education. The courses were developed to provide extensive knowledge in the research and practices of educational leadership. The professors allowed opportunities to learn, create, synthesize, and evaluate. The Gwinnett Public School county office personnel teamed with the professors in integrating the school system's structure and procedures into our learning. For example, we learned the research and effective strategies for implementing staff development programs, and then had the county staff development coordinator explain the school system's practices and procedures.

Another aspect that was notable from the interaction with our professors and county office personnel was that they served as educational leader role models. The professionalism and ethics they possessed showed the traits we must adopt to become successful school leaders. The highly refined instruction we received throughout the year embellished our leadership perceptions.

The peer relationships and quality course work were significant, however, the greatest benefit of the LEAD program was the internship. During the twelve week experience, I was in a mentor-mentee relationship with the principal and assistant principals of my school. The organization of the internship also provided a course designed to help the LEAD candidates become reflective practitioners.

The structure of my local school intern experience began with the opportunity to observe interactions of the administrators in situations involving teachers, students, and parents. I was also assigned two long term projects that gave me specific areas to begin focusing my problem solving skills. The principal of my school provided time for me to reflect on events of the week with him. During this time he allowed me to question him on the decisions he had made. This was one of the most significant activities because I realized there is often little time to think about the decisions a school leader makes, however, there is always time to reflect and learn from the actions one has taken.

Working closely with three administrators gave me the benefit of learning varying management and supervision styles. The administrators set up the internship so that I was able to make administrative decisions but I was not responsible for decisions without input and advice from my mentors.

The course we took in conjunction with our internship significantly enhanced the practical experience. The class provided us

time to share our activities and reflections for the week. In our peer group we felt comfortable discussing our situations in a depth greater than with our individual principals. The professor guided us through a variety of role playing situations that added to the dimension of our leadership insights.

The internship component of the LEAD program broadened my definition of educational leadership. As I continue to contemplate the occurrences of that year, the internship in combination with the peer interaction and the course work were vital links that empowered me to become an effective educational leader.

Applications After LEAD

After completing the LEAD program, I was selected for an assistant principal position in a Gwinnett County middle school. I remained in the position for two years before being appointed to the principal of the school. The flurry of my promotion was quick by our county standards, however, I felt completely prepared to handle the responsibilities of a school with 1350 students. My confidence in this task could be attributed to the LEAD agenda.

LEAD provided me with the strengths previously discussed as well as other leadership attributes that have blossomed during my past four years as an administrator. One of these is realizing a need for a vision. The value of learning the importance of a vision and of having it modeled by the exemplary professionals I worked with throughout LEAD has helped me transform our school into a model

technology school for the state. I have used the network of individuals that I built up during the LEAD program to help facilitate my efforts. Our school has received local, state, and national accolades because of our technological advancements which enhance instruction. Sharing a creative vision has excited our parent, student, and teacher communities. The stimulation of a futuristic specter has given the system of my school direction, focus, and a long term plan.

I believe I was selected for my administrative positions because of my comprehension and implementation of risk taking opportunities. The entire LEAD program was designed with minimizing the risk of failure. Therefore, we graduated from the LEAD training without being fearful of boundaries. This has allowed me to transform my school into one in which the needs of the children drive our decisions. As a principal I have strongly taken to task any situation that will provide success for a child without worrying or being limited by the bureaucracy of the system. The LEAD training enabled me to realize that taking a risk and building for the future can create a successful environment.

Since the LEAD program, I have completed my specialist's degree and plan to begin my doctoral program. The impact of the dynamic professors who taught me in LEAD have a daily effect on my leadership style. I continue to read the books and journal articles they write. Reading an article by Dr. Pajak enlightened me to the work of Peter Senji. My school leadership team is developing a staff

development course based on his work of learning systems. Dr. Glickman's work on action research has helped me promote improvements in community involvement, teacher evaluations, and teacher perceptions. The relationship and respect that we built for our professors during this intense year of LEAD will always have a powerful impact on my actions and beliefs as a school leader.

Would I have developed the same attributes and skills without the LEAD program? After reflecting on the ways LEAD has enriched my strength and wisdom to help me as a school administrator, I must conclude I would not. LEAD has given me both knowledge and experience to practice educational leadership with feelings of success and excitement. The many benefits of the LEAD program have forever molded my perceptions of effective school leadership.

LED TO LEAD

Jeff White

The individual circumstances that led me to apply for LEAD were very atypical for a classroom teacher, the underlying need to understand more about one's self and one's place in the overall world of education is common to classroom teachers. The need to express the leadership abilities within one's self cannot be denied. These internal inconsistencies with our desires to continue learning and growing throughout our career places us in a difficult position. How do we learn more about the aspect of leadership without leaving the classroom? Programs like LEAD provide classroom teachers with the opportunities they need to develop that aspect of their training without having to leave the classrooms they thrive in so successfully.

I began my teaching career in Gwinnett County in 1980 and almost immediately began having professional and personal growth opportunities. I was not just allowed to undergo these opportunities I was encouraged to do so. Each year I moved into new and more challenging situations and was allowed to grow in a safe yet stimulating environment. As a result of this support I have been honored with several awards. I received a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship to study physics at Princeton in 1988. I was a state level Presidential Award winner in Science in 1989. I was named to the Teach For America Summer Institute Faculty in 1990. I received the Atlanta Journal Honor Teacher Award in 1990, and in 1991 I was

selected Georgia's Teacher of the Year. I owe a great deal of my success to the progressive training and continued support of my growth by the Gwinnett County School System.

Representing Georgia's teachers as Teacher of the Year was an incredible experience and it offered me an unbelievable number of opportunities to grow in ways I had never experienced. As my year as Teacher of the Year began to move into full swing, I had to decide whether or not to apply for the LEAD program. While I had been experiencing many aspects of education, I had also learned enough about the entire spectrum of education to know that I did not have a good understanding of the leadership perspective. It was this gap in my own view of education that drove me to apply for LEAD.

The LEAD Experience

The School System philosophy has maintained that LEAD is a program designed to take personnel with leadership potential and provide them with the opportunity to experience the "Leadership" perspective by doing the necessary course work and working in a developmental internship. The program should build the pool of qualified personnel and provide a backbone of classroom teachers who understand the leadership perspective and can act as staff leaders at their local schools.

The development of this cadre of teacher-leaders has greatly enhanced the ability of principals to move their schools toward successful schools of the twenty-first century. These teacher-leaders

have been vital in the development of several faculties and the progress of our system as a whole. LEAD alumni provide a wide variety of skills and talents to our school system in a myriad of positions including classroom teacher. My talents and responsibilities grew enormously with my experiences in LEAD. I now feel more enabled and empowered to be a faculty leader and to work more closely with the leadership team at my school. LEAD has broken down several barriers for me and continues to provide me with the skills I need to be a better teacher, faculty member, and local school leader from my perch in the classroom.

Each course in LEAD taught me a great deal about the various responsibilities and view points of administrators and I began to see how my strengths and weaknesses could be best utilized in a wide array of situations. I began to study school decisions from my semi-administrative viewpoint and I soon learned that many I disagreed with from a teacher's perspective were in fact, the best decision for the school. Several courses allowed us to interview various administrators and I learned much about how they developed their leadership styles and how they developed their personnel to compliment them. I gained much insight into how to select staff members, how to organize a leadership team, and how to utilize all staff members for the good of the school. I became intrigued with the research on collaborative schools and centered most of my personal research on that topic. I had never experienced a truly collaborative

administrative team, but I had experienced collaboration during my special assignment. I knew the security I felt deep inside as I worked with people without regard to their position. I had helped plan the in-service training for Local School Administrators, I had worked with Cabinet members in leadership training situations, I had been valued by my "superiors" through a truly collaborative experience.

It would be difficult to determine one or two most important aspects of the LEAD program. Each course offered something I needed and could not get from any other, and each one moved me from where I was to the next plateau of professional development. The two events which posed the greatest challenges and the greatest rewards were the twelve-week internship and the personal philosophy paper. Both of these experiences forced me to look deep inside of myself for a greater understanding of who I am and what I need out of my career. I flushed out many old feelings, dreams, and goals and replenished myself with new ones. I was both exhilarated and exhausted during and after each. It sounds peculiar that I, a self-proclaimed risk-taker, would admit that I never really reached for the limit because I was always somewhat afraid that I would be disappointed when I found out what my limits were. I discovered how much more intensely I could approach a task when I had stripped away my own preconceptions and allowed myself to reach for the limit.

The internship allowed me to experience an elementary school for the first time in my professional career. I learned quickly that the

job I once thought to be so easy, teaching little children, was by far more complex and difficult than I ever imagined. I learned quickly that I had much to learn and much to offer. It was a tremendously exciting relationship that was symbiotic and truly gratifying.

The LEAD Program moved me into an arena from which I cannot return. I now stand at a crossroad in my career, a time in which I must decide which path to follow. My options are many, limited only by my inability to conceive all of them. My responsibilities to myself, my family, and the system that has allowed me to achieve my personal best are also many. It is now time for me to begin choosing the path that will allow me to utilize my talents for the maximum benefit to my family and the Gwinnett County School System.

Life After LEAD

The formal components of the LEAD Program concluded in June 1992, yet LEAD has not and will not ever end. I have forged partnerships with thirteen people who have vastly affected my life. I have forged a relationship with a school system that has rejuvenated me beyond imagination, and I have forged a relationship with a University staff which will serve as a guiding light throughout my career. I approach educational situations with more confidence that I can resolve them, and I have a much deeper understanding of the person I am and the position I need to fill within my school, my home, and my county.

I have begun a new chapter in my professional life and much of

what I experience on a daily basis is a blending of previous experiences. I have moved from the comfort of twelve years at the high school level into my first year at the middle school level. I am now teaching a different curriculum to a different population in a different environment. It is difficult for me to project which aspects of my new position are enhanced by my LEAD experiences and which are due to other factors in my professional development. I am only beginning to fully understand the impact that the LEAD program has had on my professional life. I still marvel at the number of ways that LEAD enters my professional life every day. I am a better teacher for having the opportunity to view teachers from the supervisory perspective. I am a better faculty member for having the opportunity to work in a leadership position, and I am a better representative of all educators for having glimpsed a more global perspective. I am not far enough removed from the course work to effectively evaluate its entire impact on my life, but I realize that I will continue to discover that impact for a very long time.

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